

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)**

**DATE: 30 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**LEAD OFFICER: JOHN HILDER (Area Highways Manager for Guildford and Waverley)**

**SUBJECT: HIGHWAYS UPDATE**

**DIVISION: ALL**



<b><u>SUMMARY OF ISSUE:</u></b>
This report provides an update on the 2015/16 programmes of highway improvement and maintenance works funded by this committee.
<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></b>
<b>The Local Committee (Guildford) is asked to</b> note progress and outturn cost for the 2015/16 programme of highway works funded by this committee and described at <b>Annex 1</b> .
<b><u>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></b>
The committee is not asked to make any highways decisions at this meeting.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **2015/16 Budgets and Forecast Expenditure**

- 1.1 The 2015/16 budgets, allocations, forecast expenditure to the year end for individual schemes and initiatives are set out at **Annex 1**.

### **A31 Hog's Back central reservation crossing at East Flexford Lane**

- 1.2 The Road Safety Working Group (RSWG) for Guildford comprises SCC highways officers and Police road safety officers, and meets several times a year to review accident clusters and consider what might be done to reduce collisions.
- 1.3 In May 2014 the group reviewed accidents at the central reservation crossing point the A31 Hogs Back at East Flexford Lane. In the three years since 2011 there had been seven accidents involving drivers using the gap and the group recommends that it is permanently closed to traffic.

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- 1.4 At the March 2015 meeting the committee agreed to advertise the closure of the central reservation crossing point at Flexford Lane.
- 1.5 The committee were advised that there are likely to be objections from residents who are directly affected and such objections would be reported to a future meeting of this committee for a decision on whether to proceed with the proposed closure.
- 1.6 Details of responses from residents are set out at **Annex 2** each with the comments of Road Safety Working Group officers.
- 1.7 All 15 respondents strongly objected to the proposed closure and it is understood the local Surrey County Councillor has received further objections.
- 1.8 In view of the strength of objection the Area Highway Manager will review possible alternatives to full closure and come forward with recommendations at the December meeting of the committee.
- 1.9 It is worth noting that a number of other central reservation gaps on the Hog's Back were closed 14 years ago, in 2001. Closing this gap was proposed at that time, but was not progressed, thought to be due to the strength of objection.

### **Guildford High Street Setts**

- 1.10 Completed tenders for relaying the setts were returned by five contractors in July, while three further contractors failed to submit prices.
- 1.11 SCC officers have met the two contractors who submitted the lowest prices to fully assess their submissions.
- 1.12 The Surrey Guildford Joint Board will meet Friday 25 September 2015 to discuss finance for this scheme.
- 1.13 With the Christmas embargo on work in the High Street starting in mid-November, the window to commence works before the New Year is closing and it is likely that works will start after Christmas. This will also allow full pre-publicity and full engagement with retailers and other stakeholders prior to commencement.

### **Customer Enquiries and Reactive Repairs**

- 1.14 The total number of enquiries received between January and June 2015 was 65,721, an average of 11,000 per month. This is consistent with the first quarter but lower than the corresponding period in 2014 due to the flooding we experienced last year.
- 1.15 All enquiries are categorised at the point of logging, either automatically through the website or by officers, safety defects are directed to Kier with the remainder passed to the SCC local office for further investigation. During 2014 the average split was 44% SCC and 56 % Kier, for the year to date this has shifted to 35/65. Improvements to the online reporting and general information available to the public and through the Surrey County Council Contact Centre have contributed to this change.

- 1.16 For Guildford specifically, 8,285 enquiries have been received since January of which 2858 (35%) were directed to the local area office for action, of these 95% have been resolved. This response rate is in line with the countywide average.
- 1.17 For the first half of 2015, 288 complaints were received of which 49 stage 1 and 4 stage 2 were for the South West Area, including Guildford. The service was found to be at fault in 7 of these. The two main reasons for these complaints were lack of contact and resurfacing. We continue to work closely with the corporate customer relations team to improve performance. In addition new systems have been introduced to actions identified by complaints to ensure delivery and no further escalation.
- 1.18 A new Works Communication Team is being developed the purpose of which is to improve the availability of work programmes, increase information available to the public to allow them to self serve and deliver significant improvements to the advance notification of planned works.
- 1.19 We would like to make Members aware that during September we will be conducting a dedicated online National Highways & Transport survey for Members. This is the first time it has been carried out for several years and the Service is keen to receive as much feedback as possible to help influence future business planning.
- 1.20 Examples of improvements made over the last year include the introduction of the new Works Manager System and changes to the Roadworks web page. An improvement project for communicating information on Horizon resurfacing schemes is ongoing.
- 1.21 To increase our understanding of customer satisfaction we have arranged for customer service questions to be included in the annual National Highways & Transport survey. This will provide a new opportunity for Benchmarking the service we provide and input to future business planning. A Member survey will run in parallel to this giving councillors the opportunity to have their say, more information will be provided through the CSE Member Reference Group.

## **2. OPTIONS:**

- 2.1 Officers seek to implement the most cost effective measures which meet scheme objectives.

## **3. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 3.1 Appropriate consultation will be carried out for all schemes.

## **4. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 4.1 Works will be carried out by SCC's term highways contractor, Keir, who won the term contract in a competitive tender process.

## **5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 There are no equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

**6. LOCALISM:**

- 6.1 Works and schemes are designed to improve and make safer the facilities for local communities in the borough.
- 6.2 The Lengthsman initiative allows parish councils to undertake enhanced maintenance of the public highway.

**7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

**8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 8.1 As set out in the body of the report. There are no decisions to be made on this report.

**9. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 9.1 Officers will continue to progress the programme of schemes agreed by the committee.

**Contact Officer: John Hilder**  
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**Consulted:**  
 As described within the report

**Annexes:**

1. Highways budget and forecast expenditure for 2015/16
2. East Flexford Lane Consultation Responses

**Sources/background papers:**  
 Local Committee for Guildford Wednesday 25 March 2015: Item 15: 'Highways Update Report'